



Backpacking



Backpacking in Zion doubled between 1980 and 1990 and again between 1990 and 2000. In the last five years it has decreased. The current number of backpackers is similar to that of the mid-1990s. As use changes new management alternatives may be needed.

Current Management Policies

- Group size is limited to 12 people.
- Commercial guiding is not permitted.
- All overnight use is managed by backcountry permit.
- In popular areas, camping is limited to designated sites (Narrows, West Rim, LaVerkin Creek).
- At-large camping is permitted in less heavily used areas (East Rim, Southwest Desert, Lower Right Fork).
- Designated campsites and maintained trails usually do not occur within the Pristine Zone
- Narrows backpackers are encouraged to carry solid human waste out of the backcountry.
- All backpackers are encouraged to follow Leave No Trace principles.

Issues to Consider

- Solitude is expected in backcountry settings. In your Zion experiences, are expectations for solitude balanced with current use limits?
- The park strives to maintain solitude and minimize resource impacts. Designated campsites are used to meet these objectives. At what use level should campsites be designated?
- Is commercial guiding within the primitive zone appropriate? Why or why not?
- What human waste sanitation techniques should backpackers be required to use to assure safe water quality in streams and springs?
- Wildlife can become habituated to human foods threatening their health and visitor safety, and damaging backpacking gear. What steps, if any, should be taken to provide for food storage at campsites?